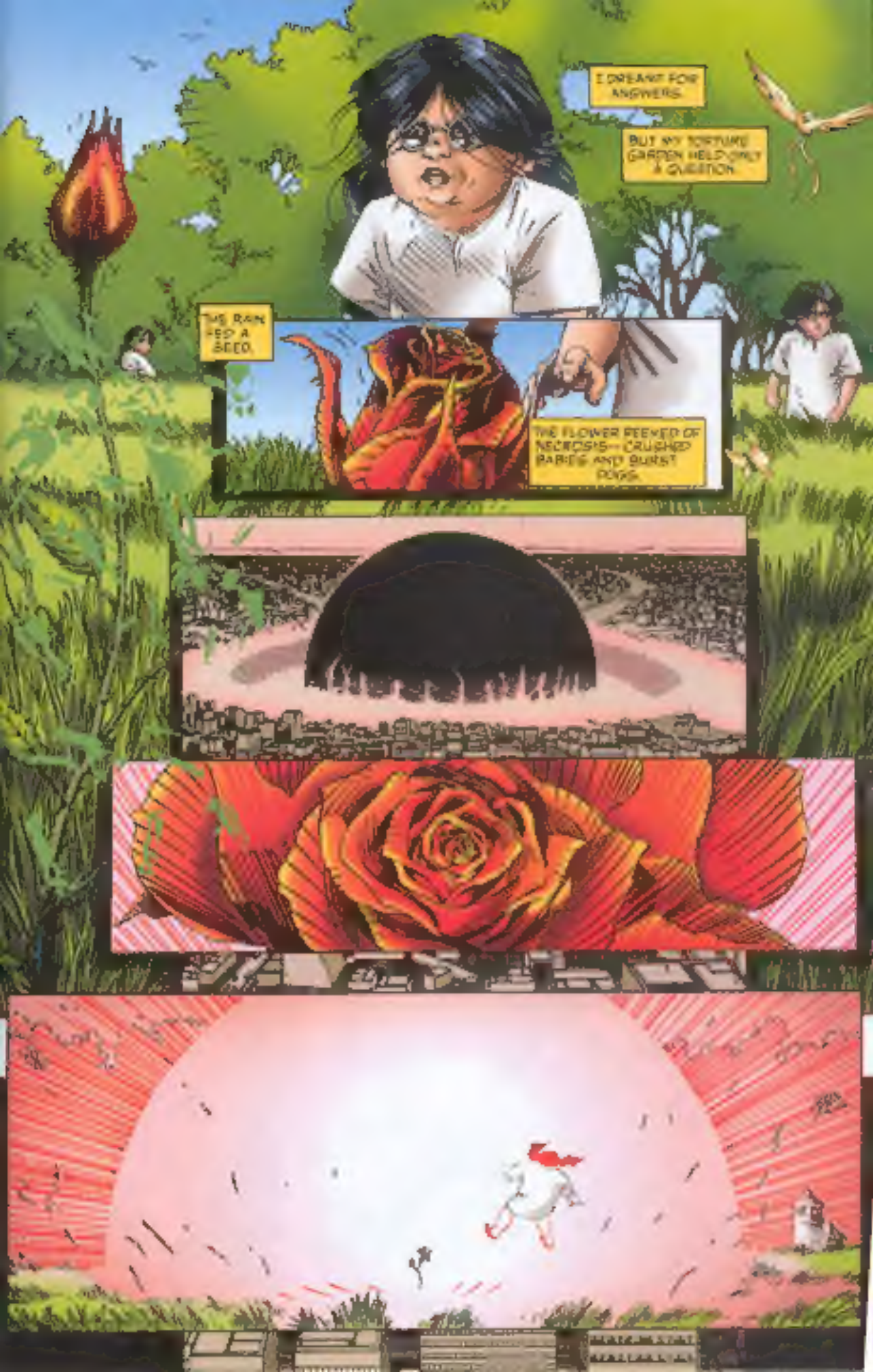
I WAS JUST TEN YEARS OLD
DURING THE EXPERIMENT, I LOST CONSCIOUSNESS. THEY PLACED ME IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION.
I HAD A DREAM DURING THOSE LONG YEARS OF SLEEP.

IT WAS COMPOSED OF FRAGMENTARY IMAGES...
...OF ANDRA... NEO-TOKYO...
...OF TETSUO... THE FUTURE...
Candy Flower
NAPALM
STORY: WARREN ELLIS
ART: TERRY SHOEMAKER
COLOR: BRIAN BUCCELLATO

I SPENT MY THIRTEEN YEARS OF DREAM IN A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN CHERISHED FROM A CHILDHOOD PICTURE BOOK.
SPEAKING ANIMALS PLAYED IN THE FOREST, AND THREE BILLION COLORS OF FISH CURLED AND SPARKLED THEIR WAY DOWNSTREAM.
MY WORLD WAS NO THICKER THAN A PAGE.
BUT I LOVED IT.
THINK OF MY SHOCKED ELECTRIC MIND AS A DAM.
THINK OF THE FUTURE AS A WATERFALL.
THERE WAS A HOLE IN MY HEAD.
AT FIRST, I IGNORED THE STRANGE SHEEP-ISH INTO MY PAPER GARDEN.
THE TREES WERE JUST TREES, I SAID AND MADE IT SO IN MY OWN HEAD.
ONE INCH LONG AND SIXTY YEARS DEEP.

ONE DAY THE HOLE GOT BIG ENOUGH FOR THE RAIN TO FALL THROUGH.
CANDY RAIN, WRAPPED IN LURID GREEN AND SUFFOCATING WHITE.
I DON'T TRUST IT.
I NEVER LIKED CANDY— TOO EASY A PLEASURE.
FISH BECAME BOYS, HURLING THEMSELVES OUT OF THEIR STREAM.
THEY DON'T EVEN UNWRAP THE STUFF.
THEY TOOK IT IN WOLFISH GULPS, LIKE DROWNING MEN SURFACING IN AIR.
NEEDING IT.
ONE ATE MORE THAN THE OTHERS.
HIS EYES LIT UP LIKE CREMATION FIRES, AND HIS BELLY BECAME TIGHT AND DISTENDED.
CANDY GRINS ON EASY FACES, SMELLING OF LOCKER ROOMS AND BEDSHEETS.
I NEVER TRUSTED BOYS.

THE OTHER BOYS COULDN'T HANDLE THE CANDY.
THEY GOT SICK.
THE FUTURE RAN IN THEIR BLOOD AND JUICES.
BUT THE STRONG BOY... THE CANDY MADE HIM STRONGER.
HE RAN INTO THE FOREST--SEPARATED FOREVER FROM THE ORDINARY STREAM.
SHE'S
OHMH
SHE'S WATCHING US.
THE BLOOD ON MY PAPER GARDEN DROVE ME OUT OF MY MIND--LITERALLY.
MY SUBCONSCIOUS PROBED BEYOND MY CRYOCHAMBER, LOOKING FOR A SAFER LIE TO HIDE IN.
INSTEAD, I FOUND... RELIGION.
NO DECENT OCCIDENTAL GOD WAS IN THEM, AND IN MY HORROR, NO TOLERANT BUDDHA WAS IN ME.
FOR MY WORLD--BE IT CLEAN PAPER OR FILTHY TRUTH--TO MAKE SENSE, I NEEDED SOMETHING ELSE...


I DREAMT FOR ANSWERS
BUT MY FORTUNE GARDEN HELD ONLY A QUESTION
THE RAIN FED A SEED.
THE FLOWER FEEVED OF NECROSIS— CRUSHED PARTS AND BURST POSE.

THE LAST OF MY CHILDHOOD CAME DOWN AS FALLOUT.
I WAITED FOR IT TO FINISH WITH HOT BLACK SNOW ON MY SHOULDERS.
ONLY ONE SINGLE TREE IN MY BEAUTIFUL FOREST SURVIVED THE STORM.
I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO TOUCH IT.
AS THE SUNLIGHT HARDENED OVER THE TREE, VIET NAM NEWSREELS FLASH-FORWARDED THROUGH MY MEMORY.
MAGIC WORDS FROM ANOTHER MAGIC GARDEN-- DMZ, AND FIREFIGHT, AND AGENT ORANGE...
...AND NAPALM.
THE SUN GOT BRIGHTER. SUDDENLY.
IT'S HARD LIGHT BLEACHED MY SKIN, AND PHOSPHOROUS EXPLODED ON MY DEAD EYES.

THEN IT HIT ME.
PRECOGNITION IS NOT LIKE HAVING A DOSSIER ON THE FUTURE DROPPED AT YOUR FEET.
IT REQUIRES STRENGTH AND FAITH. IT MUST BE DECIPHERED.
SO I STOOD IN MY COLD GARDEN AND READ THE FUTURE IN THE MOVEMENT OF BLOOD IN AIR.
CANDY.
FLOWER.
NAPALM.

THE STREAM FLOWS ON BEFORE US.
I WILL TELL A BOY THIS, IN YEARS TO COME.
NAPALM WILL HAVE TAKEN HIS ARM, AND CANDY WILL FLOW IN HIS VEINS.
WE ARE ALL PART OF THE FLOW OF THE SAME GREAT STREAM.
AKIRA IS OUTSIDE THE STREAM.
THE UNIVERSE FLOWS TOWARD THE *ULTIMATE* CONCLUSION.